

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 121643

70

ORIGIN INT-05

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 EA-10 /026 R

DRAFTED BY OMSN:FHWILLIAMS:KKC

APPROVED BY OMSN:RYSCOTT

EA/ANP:KNOWLES (SUBSTANCE)

----- 045276

O 232321Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO HICOMTERPACIS

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 121643

TAGS:PFOR, TQ

SUBJECT:REPLY TO LETTER FROM UNITED CAROLINIAN ASSOCIATION

DOTA NO. 184-TT

FOR ACTING HICOM FROM ACTING SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

PLEASE DELIVER TO MR. FELIX RABULIMAN; ALSO DELIVER COPIES  
TO PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER AND STATUS LNO.

QUOTE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

- OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

- WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

- MAY 23, 1975

UNITED CAROLINIAN ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 4, CAPITOL HILL

SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950

DEAR FRIENDS:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RECENT LETTER OUTLINING YOUR CONCERNS  
ABOUT THE BALLOT TO BE OFFERED TO THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN  
MARIANAS IN THE PLEBISCITE TO BE HELD ON JUNE 17.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 121643

THE WORDING OF THE PLEBISCITE BALLOT WAS AGREED UPON BY

THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT CONCERNED ONLY AFTER THE MOST CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THE OBLIGATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES UNDER THE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT.

THE "YES" VOTE FORMULATION WAS STATED AS IT WAS, WITHOUT AMPLIFICATION, BECAUSE THE COMMONWEALTH COVENANT ITSELF SETS FORTH THE MEANING OF A POSITIVE VOTE IN TERMS OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS AND THE SUBSEQUENT SEPARATION OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS FROM THE OTHER DISTRICTS OF THE TTIP, IF THE COMMONWEALTH COVENANT IS APPROVED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS AND BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE WORDING OF THE "NO" OPTION WAS DETERMINED IN LIGHT OF THE OBLIGATION OF THE UNITED STATES AS ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE VOTERS THAT OPTIONS OTHER THAN COMMONWEALTH AND POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES WERE OPEN TO THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. THE UNITED STATES WANTED THE PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT IF THE SIGNED COMMONWEALTH COVENANT WERE TO BE REJECTED, THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT WOULD BE THAT THE NORTHERN MARIANAS WOULD CONTINUE IN THEIR PRESENT STATUS, THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE SEPARATED ADMINISTRATIVELY FROM THE TTPI GOVERNMENT, AND THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS WOULD HAVE A FULL OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE WITH THE OTHER DISTRICTS OF THE TTPI IN CONSIDERING VARIOUS FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS ALTERNATIVES.

IT IS RELEVANT TO RECALL AT THIS POINT THAT THE COMMONWEALTH COVENANT IS A NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT, REPRESENTING A CONSIDERABLE MEASURE OF GIVE AND TAKE ON BOTH SIDES. IT WAS NEGOTIATED CAREFULLY AND PATIENTLY AND IN GOOD FAITH TO PROVIDE FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS THE MOST FAVORABLE AND FEASIBLE ARRANGEMENT IN ANSWER TO THEIR LONG STANDING DESIRE FOR POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES. GIVEN THE LIMITS OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION AND POLITICAL REALITIES, THE COMMONWEALTH COVENANT, WHICH WILL COME BEFORE THE VOTERS IN THE PLEBISCITE ON JUNE 17 FOR THEIR ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION, REPRESENTS IN EFFECT THE

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 121643

EXTENT TO WHICH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO GO TO MEET THAT DESIRE.

TO YOUR ASSERTION THAT "BIAS AND EMOTION" HAVE BEEN INJECTED INTO THE WORDING OF THE BALLOT, I CAN ONLY RESPOND WITH A FIRM AND UNQUALIFIED DISAVOWAL OF ANY SUCH INTENTION. I BELIEVE THE RECORD OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE

MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION OVER MORE THAN TWO YEARS STANDS AS CONVINCING PROOF OF THE FAIRNESS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE EFFORTS TO SEE THAT THE COVENANT SHOULD PROVIDE JUST AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT FOR ALL CITIZENS OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. WE WOULD DEEPLY REGRET ANY MOVE ON THE PART OF ANY GROUP IN THE NORTHERN MARIANAS THAT WOULD FOSTER THE TYPE OF ATTITUDE WHICH YOU DESCRIBE.

I APPRECIATE YOUR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS. WHILE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO ACCEDE TO YOUR REQUEST FOR A CHANGE IN THE WORDING OF THE "NO" VOTE ON THE PLEBISCITE BALLOT, I WISH TO REASSURE YOU THAT THE PRESENT LANGUAGE WAS INTENDED TO BE ENTIRELY FAIR AND IMPARTIAL. THE UNITED STATES FURTHER INTENDS THAT THE PLEBISCITE EDUCATION PROGRAM SHOULD PROVIDE ALL OF THE VOTERS ALL OF THE RELEVANT FACTS INCLUDING OBJECTIVE INFORMATION AND EXPLANATION OF THE CHOICES OFFERED ON THE BALLOT.

- SINCERELY YOURS,  
- KENT FRIZZELL  
- ACTING SECRETARY

INGERSOLL

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, REFERENDUMS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 MAY 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975STATE121643  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** FHWILLIAMS:KKC  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750182-0563  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750521/aaaaatbb.tel  
**Line Count:** 141  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ORIGIN INT  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 29 JUL 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <29 JUL 2003 by maginmm>; APPROVED <27 JAN 2004 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** EPLY TO LETTER FROM UNITED CAROLINIAN ASSOCIATION DOTA NO. 184-TT  
**TAGS:** PFOR, TQ  
**To:** HICOMTERPACIS  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006